

660
H. Macmillan (J.)

A

(24)

LETTER

From a Friend to Mr. *John Mackmillan*, wherein is Demonstrated the Contrariety of his Principles and Practices to the Scripture, our Covenants, Confession of Faith, and Practice of *CHRIST* and the Primitive Christians; Containing also Remarks on his and Mr. *John Mackniely's* Printed Protestation, Declinature and Appeal, compared vvith vvhat they gave in to the Commission of the late General Assembly, upon the 29th. Day of *September. 1708.* the one vastly differing from the other.

PREFACE.



Christian Reader,

IF you Answer your Designation, you can't without a bleeding Heart and weeping Eye look at the present State of this Church. *Scotland* hath lost much of her Ancient Glory and Beauty, and of the Heroick Courage, unbyass'd Faithfulness and flaming Zeal for Christ and his Cause; She once had, and on all Occasions manifested to the World. We are *Now* involved in all Circumstances of Sinfulness and Danger; All Flesh have corrupted their Way; Law and Gospel are Contemn'd and Trampled on; All that's Sacred is mock'd and laughed at; Atheism, Deism and Popery are Rampant; All kinds of Sins (some of them never before known to Us) with the most killing Aggravations abound and lift up their Heads unpunished; Our Mother hath dealt treacherously with her Lord and Husband, and hath highly violated her Marriage-Covenant, and a Provoked God hath in a great measure left her, and in the fierceness of his Anger given her up to be Persecuted on all hands: She is Oppressed by Malignants, Jacobites, Prelatick Teachers, promotters of Superstition and Corrupt Mixture of humane Inventions, English Popish Ceremonies in the Worship of God; And lastly, By false Prophets. In many places the Ministers of the Established Church are Insulted, Rabbled, and by Violence hindred to go about their Work, and when Application is made by them to Persons in the Government for a Remedy to all these Evils, they are Neglected and Discourag'd, tho' they have the Law and the Countenance of our most Gracious QUEEN on their Side: And to compleat the dismal Scene of our Misery, we have had for a long time among us, one

A

of

of the most Scandalous, Pernicious, and most unaccountable Schisms that
 perhaps ever was known to any Age of the Church; a Schism carried on
 by three weak Men, supported by a poor People, and both are equally
 ignorant of the nature of Union with, and Separation from a Church, and
 of what will justify the one or the other, they can't (in a Consistency
 with their Principles) hold Communion with any Church this Day on
 Earth: We Confess to our Shame, there are many things wrong among
 us, and that there are Errors in the *Administration*, against which we are,
 with the help of Grace, still struggling and contending; And we Re-
 solve ever to plead against such Corruptions: But no Man of common
 Understanding will think this National Church should be cast off, and
 that we should separate from her: We have a good *Constitution*, we have
 a Standard of Doctrine without Error (*Westminster* Confession of Faith)
 which we own as the Confession of *Our Faith*; We have Subscribed it,
 and Preach the Doctrine therein contain'd: Our Worship is pure with-
 out Mens Additions; Our Discipline and Government (in their *Constitu-
 tion*) are agreeable unto, founded on, and appointed in the word of
 God, and there are no Sinful Terms of Communion imposed. As we can't
 (and hope never shall) justify the Measures some take, and for which
 they shall Answer to God; So we will not despise the Dust of Zion,
 (what of the Covenanted Work of Reformation is remaining among us)
 we must favour that Dust, and look on it as Precious, and Pray and
 Wrestle by the help of Grace, that our Lord would return to build his own
 House (for Men have not Courage to do it) and take a New Infeftment
 thereof, by a Cloud of his Glory. There are a Set of faithful Ministers
 in this Church, who are troubled for the many Offences that are given,
 and for laying so many Stumbling-blocks before the Blind; And as they
 Mourn for these things in Secret, so they give frequent Testimony against
 them: One thing I can't forbear to mention, That hath given great
 Offence both in *England* and here; The giving the Degree of a *Dr. of Di-
 vinity* to Mr. *Calamy*, a Man well known to be very unsound, parti-
 cularly in the great Article of *Justification*, and about the Government of
 the Church; A Man who sets up as an Advocate for *Occasional Conformity*
 with the Church of *England*; And who, when in *Scotland*, practis'd with
 the Prelatick Clergy (tho' contrary to their Inclination) to qualify to the civil Government, telling them,
 they might Then Receive Favour, and Mr. *Robert Fleeming* likewise, hath got a Patent sent him to
 be *Magister Artium*, tho' he hath published many Books cram'd with Errors, some whereof sapp the
 Foundations of Religion, and which were by General Councils Condemn'd as Heresy: He asserts,
 That the Souls of all Men (Christ's not excepted) to be a piece of Matter: saith likewise the Son of
 God, had a Soul and body before his Incarnation, and that the Son of *Mary* and the Son of God are not
 one Person, but two distinct Persons whom he compareth to *Adam* and *Eve*, who tho' United, were yet
 two distinct Persons: Lord pluck up what thou didst not Plant I shall conclude with telling you
 of the Apprehensions all the Godly (Ministers and People) have of approaching Judgments, Provi-
 dence seems big, and to be labouring with dreadful Events: The Children may prove the Ruine of
 Persons, Families, if not of the Body of the Nation: 'Tis equally our Interest, Wisdom, and Duty,
 to fly to Christ, and take Sanctuary in that Blessed City of Refuge, where we shall be Secure, when
 Sinners shall be expos'd to all the Direful Effects of Gods most Fiery Indignation.

S I R,

AS Unity is the very Ligament, Strength and Bulwark of all Societies, so Division weakens, and at length Ruins it : And this hath always been the Maxim of the Enemies of Christ's Church *Divide & Impera*, once Divide, and then Rule at pleasure. Should I allow my self or others to think, that to Ruine the Church of Scotland intirely, is your great Scope and Design, you would certainly Charge me with want of Charity : And though I am sufficiently perswaded, the Methods you take, have a Natural Tendency that way, yet I shall rather constrain my self to imagine that it is your Blind, Ungoverned, and Precipitant Zeal, that prompts you to follow such irregular and unaccountable Courses ; But were your Zeal according to Knowledge, sure you would be capable to give clear, solid, and ingenuous Answers unto the following Queries, for the Defence and Vindication of your Practice.

Querie 1. How your present Disorderly Practise agreeth with the first Paper you gave in to the Commission of the Church sitting at *Edinburgh, June 9th. 1704.* In which you plainly, and in exprefs Terms (Subscribed with your hand) *Declared it was your Judgment, that the Sentences of a Church-Judicatory ought to be Submitted unto, tho' Unjust, and that Redress is to be craved and expected from Superior Judicatories.* Sir, This always hath been the Sentiment of Orthodox Divines, and seemed then to have been yours, else you have greatly jugged with the Church of Christ : Yea, I am apt to believe, without breach of Charity, that therein you have jugged both with God and Man : For I remember, a certain Person once urging you with that Question, your Answer was, *It's one thing what a Man does out of Conscience, and another what he does for the sake of Peace* : But as the same Person then told you, you have Counter-acted and Contradicted your Conscience for Peace, which is noways agreeable to the Gospel-Rules : If you now say (to save your self from being Branded with Hypocritical Dealing) it was then your Opinion. Then I would ask you.

2. What Arguments have induced you to alter your Judgment, and to go cross to the Judgment of all Orthodox Divines, if you have found out

(4)
any, produce them; We are Men of Judgment, and I hope of Conscience, as well as you. I have heard of one Argument you have sometimes used, *That the Remonstrators when Deposed continued to Preach as you do;* But you don't consider the vast Difference of the Case of the Church then and now; At that time both Ministers and Professors were sadly Rent, and there may be many things done in the time of a broken State of a Church, which cannot, nor ought not to be born with in a time when a Church is well Constitute. Moreover, even then there were not wanting particular Judicatories of this Church, who Adopted the Interest and honest Cause of the Protesters, and did openly Reclaim and Declare 'gainst the Validity of the unjust Sentences carried by an Over-ruling Party in the Judicatories; But no such thing is to be found in your Case, the Church being now rightly Constitute, and the Sentences against you being *Nemine Contradicente* in all the Judicatories from the Presbytery to the Assembly inclusive, and no Rent to be found in any Courts of this Church.

Quer: 3. If the Commission of the Kirk, according to your desire (in your Paper given in to them *June 9th. 1704*) had Reponed you to the Exercise of the Ministry at *Balmagie*, if you would really in that Case, have thought it your Duty to have separate from this Church, and to have acted so irregularly, and to have run to all these Extravagancies.

Quer: 4. Is not your Sin highly aggravated by Counter-acting the Sentence of the Presbytery of *Kilcudbright*, after the same was ratified by the Commission: The Reason of this Inquiry is, because in the second Paper which you gave in to the Commission, you have these Expressions. *I Mr. J. M. humbly acknowledge my great Sin, in Deserting the Presbytery of Kilcubright; As also my Sin in Declining the said Presbytery, these being very contrary to my Ordination-Engagements. And I do sincerely profess my hearty Sorrow for these Sins.* Nevertheless, within a little you practically declared you thought it was no Sin to Counter-act the said Sentence, tho' ratified by the Commission, Pray, what sudden Dart of Light was this, which made you so speedily alter your Judgment? I wish you would produce it to the World for the Vindication of this your hasty Change.

Quer: 5. What Conscience have you made of the performance of that Solemn Promise in the foresaid Paper, that in the strength of God, you would live more orderly and in Subjection to the Judicatories of this Church, and would use your outmost Endeavours to maintain Unity, Concord, and Peace therein. Pray, were you then Ingenuous, or shall I think you acted so unchristianly, as publickly to Promise in the strength of God, what you was never resolved to perform? Or do you now think it was really a Sin for you to Promise to maintain Unity, Concord, and Peace in this Church; If these be your Thoughts, then sure I am, you are no Covenant-ter, being bound to Unity in our Covenants, but more of this afterwards.

Quer: 6. Did you not once own the Churches Authority? And if you did (which I suppose you cannot deny)? 1. Were you not according to your

your Principle) Guilty in concurring with all the Defections you Charge on this Church? 2. I would ask you what step of Defection has the Church of Christ in this Land, been Guilty of betwixt that time you first owned her Authority, and the time of your casting it off? Sure, you cannot alledge the Union, Abjuration, &c. Your unwarrantable Separation being long before any of these took place.

Quer. 7. If you can produce one Scripture in all the Bible that will sufficiently prove, that all these Grievances which you alledge to be in this Church, are a sufficient Ground of Separation from Her, as now Constitute, or that they would be sufficient Grounds of Separating from any Reformed Church in the World.

Quer. 8. If you be really perswaded in your Conscience, that the Method and Way you take, and what Advance you have made that way, is the true and proper Method to get these Grievances removed.

Quer. 9. What kind of Call have you to Preach the Gospel? Is it Ordinary, or Extraordinary! If the first, then Define what an ordinary Call is, and the World shall judge if you have any such Call; If you say it is Extraordinary, then you must produce Authentick Credentials thereof, else none have reason to believe you; and if they do, their Faith is as Extraordinary as your Call.

Quer. 10. Notwithstanding of the great Noise you make about our Covenants, have you ever preached up their Obligation? Have you gone through every Article of them, and proven them to be Moral Duties? I appeal to your ordinary Hearers, if ever they heard you do this; Nay, 'tis Evident, you cannot do it, because hereby you shall discover your Principles to be contrary to some of these Articles.

Quer. 11. If the Covenants were renewed and Sworn by all Ranks, except the Supreme Magistrate; if in that Case you could take and Subscribe these Covenants, as they now stand, I am afraid you would not know what to do, with Reference to the last Article of the 3d Section of the Solemn League.

Quer. 12. Was there ever in Scotland Magistracy you could have owned and submitted your self unto? I think I foresee your Answer (if you have a better give it) viz. *That you could have submitted your self for a little time to K. Ja. 6th. when he took the National Covenant, and a very little time to K. Ch. 2d.* But I shall think it strange, if you imagine the Spirit of God in his word, hath been at so much Pains to press on all Christians Subjection to Civil Magistrates lawfully invested, and yet that these Directions have never been Obligatory upon the Church of Scotland but for a little time. Pray, Sir, Satisfy your own Conscience, with respect to this, if you can.

Quer. 13. What Conscience make you of observing that Article of our Solemn League and Covenant, in which we do Oblige our selves to Guard against Dividing the King from his People, or his People from him? Pray, is not this your Study to alienate the Hearts of the People from our present Queen, the Supreme Magistrate, whom God hath Honoured in a signal manner,

manner, since her Accession to the Throne, and under whose Government we may live a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty.

Quer. 14. How your Practice agreeth with your Principles? Your Opinion being, that it is a Sin for Men to be Married with any of the present Ministers; As is evident from your making a certain Person give publick Satisfaction at *Crawford John*, for his being Married by one of the Ministers of this Church, and yet though you have been Guilty this same way, no publick Satisfaction hath been made by you for this your Crime: This looks like Partiality in the exercise of your Church Discipline and fondness on a Wife.

Quer. 15. If it be agreeable to the Spirit of the Gospel for you to take an Oath of any who enters into your Society, that they shall never again hear the present Ministers, with such a Dreadful Certification (as I am credibly informed) as is not meet so much as to be mentioned among Christians; And therefore, from the favour I bear to Religion, and from a Principle of Tenderness, I forbear to mention or make known to the World that horrid Threatning which is said to be annexed as the Penalty of the Breach of that Cruel and unhallowed Oath. Pray, Sir, What if God should make a more than ordinary Power concur with the Dispensation of his Gospel in the hands of his sent Ambassadors in the present established Ministry (whom your People are Sworn with Certification, &c. to Reject) must such (by reason of their Oath) not be allowed to be sharers of this Grace of the Gospel; Or, will you speedily Execute your Dreadful Certification upon them, if they should? If no such Oath hath been taken, or Tendered to any who have offered to enter into your Society, be pleased without Equivocation, to declare so much in plain Terms to the World.

REMARKS *on the Printed Protestation, Declinature, and Appeal, compared with the Written one, Subscribed both by Mrs. Mackmillan and Macknilly, inclosed in a Line to Nicol Spence, and presented by him to the Commission of the late Assembly, September 29th. 1708.*

IN the General, I Remark, That you would gladly have People believe, that the Sentences of the Church of *Scotland* against you, are upon the Account of your adhering to the Covenanted Work of Reformation, and testifying against the Sins of the Time. I dare appeal to your own Conscience, God's Deputy in the immortal Soul, if you really think this to be the

the Reason why the Church proceeds against you, and declares you to be none of her Communion: I am almost sure your Conscience, unless Cauterized, dictates other things to you, but this is the ordinary Practice of all Schismatics by good Words and fair Speeches to deceive the Hearts of the Simple, *Rom: 16. 17; 18. verses*, which Portion of Scripture I earnestly recommend to your serious Consideration. Pray, What Society in the World would be so Mad as to declare a Person to be none of their Communion, meerly because he owned and maintained their own Principles; this behoved indeed to be a Society of Bedlamites, and not of Men endued with the exercise of Reason: Did you find any such thing in the Libel sent to you by the Commission? Was this one of the Articles of it, or for which you was Deposed at first? *That you adhered unto a Covenanted Work of Reformation, that you Groaned under Grievances, and wished them to be removed?* Or was you Libelled for any Practice or Principle that was ever owned by the Church of Scotland? You had done more justly, if when you Printed your Declinature, you had Printed a true Copy thereof, as given in and Subscribed with your Hands to the Commission, and therewith also had Printed your Libel, that the World might have had a clear and true Account of the Matter of Fact: But who can blame you for endeavouring to cover your own Nakedness, if you had done it in a regular way, and not have taken the Principles of the Church of Scotland, as a Cover to your other Antiscriptural and Anticovenanted Principles: It is upon this very account (together with your irregular Practices, as the Act it self particularly declares) that the Church of Scotland have declared you to be none of her Communion, whatever Orthodox Principles you profess to maintain and own; they can no more be called *McMillanean* Principles, than some Orthodox Principles owned by Papists can be called Popery. As for the Principles of the Church of Scotland, neither you nor your party need be ignorant of them, are they not plainly set down in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, Larger and Shorter? All which are plainly proven from the Word of God; but where to find your Principles in Scripture, or in our Confession of Faith, I am intirely at a loss.

The true Reason then, why the Church of Scotland declared you to be none of her Communion, is not only because of your irregular Courses, but because you maintain these two Antiscriptural and Anticovenanted Principles, *viz.* First, Because you deny the Civil Magistrates Authority. 2. Because you deny the Ecclesiastick Authority. Now, Mr. Mackmillan, these are your Principles, and they differ vastly from the Principles of this Church; Here therefore, I will take occasion to Examine them. With respect then to the first, your denying of the Civil Authority, I find this Principle down right contrary. 1. To the Scripture. 2. To our Confession of Faith. 3. To our Covenants. And Lastly, To the Practice of Christ and the Primitive Christians.

First then, This your Principle is contrary to the Word of God. Pray, Sir, Don't you find the Spirit of God pressing much in his Word the Duty
of

of Subjection to Civil Magistrates, and the acknowledgment of their Authority, in *Rom. 13. chap. 1. vers. to the 8th.* you may notice both the Strictness and Universality of the Charge, and (what is mainly Material to observe) that this Charge was given the *Romans* when *Nero* was their Emperor, who was not only a Heathen Magistrate, but the first and most Violent Persecutor of the Christians, a Man so prodigiously Brutish and Tyrannical, that the World scarce brought forth such an other Monster. See also *Titus 3. 1.* and *1 Pet: 2. 13.*

2dly. This your Principle is contrar to the Confession of Faith, Consult the 23. Chap. Sect. 4. and there you'll find we assert, *That it is the Duty of the People to pray for Magistrates, to Honour their Persons, to pay them Tribute and other Dues, to obey their lawful Commands, and to be subject to their Authority for Conscience sake, and that Infidelity or Difference in Religion doth not make void the Magistrates just, and legal Authority, nor free the People from their due Obedience.* I know (from a Conference one had with your Brother Mr. Macknilly) that you may not appear to fly in the Face both of Scripture and of our Covenants, you have these things to offer upon this head.

1. You tell that you own Magistracy in the Abstract, but deny it in the Concrete. But, Sir, (if you have any Philosophy) this is to own an Accident Subsisting without a Subject, Magistracy, being an Accident, must needs inhere in some one Subject or another, so that if you own it in the Abstract, you must also own it in the Concrete, that is to say, you must own the Authority of that Person in whom that Magistracy is lodged; If you say there is nothing like Magistracy, in the Abstract to be found, at least in our Nation, then you must affirm we are in a state of absolute Anarchy, or reduced to the first state of Nature, if you say there is you must assign who that Person among us is, in whom that Abstract Form of Magistracy and Power is to be found. But,

2. You tell the World that that part of our Confession of Faith was much debated amongst the *Westminster* Divines themselves; I Answer, And why not, and so was every Article Debated, or duely Considered, as well as that. I hope no thinking Man will say, because a Point is Debated, therefore it is not agreeable or conform to the Word of God: But to pass this, be pleased your self impartially to ponder the Scriptures adduced for Probation of this Article, and if you can, Convince then the World that they are not Probative.

3. You are pleased to tell, that our Fore-fathers in the latter times of Persecution, denyed the Civil Magistrates Authority particularly, they would not pay Cess; And that you by your Principle and Practice approve of what they did before you. Answer 1. I deny that ever they disowned the Civil Magistrates Authority, but only the abuse of it; Yea, though they had, yet the Case is now quite altered, in regard the Exercise then of the Magistrates Authority was absolutely Tyrannical. But 2. As to their denying to pay Cess, the Reason of their doing so was, because the Narra-

ting

tive of the Act imposing it, did declare the Design of it, was to bear down the Rendivouzes of Rebellion, the Title they then gave to the Publick Meetings of the People of God for Worship, but no such Narrative is to be found in any Act imposing Tribute, and no such way is it applied.

Thirdly, This Principle of yours, is contrary to our Covenants: In the 3. Section of the Solemn League, you will find, that this Principle of yours, downright flees in the Face of that Article, and Contradicts it. Do not you there find we are bound to Preserve and Defend the Civil Magistrates Authority, and yet by your Principles you say, we are not; So that by your Principles (notwithstanding of the Buzel you make about our Covenants) you plainly Contradict them, look at *Eccl. 8. 2. I counsel thee to keep the King's Commandment, and that in regard of the Oath of God.*

Fourthly, This your Principle is contrary both to the Practise of Christ and Primitive Christians; Take but a little view of the Practise of Christ himself, when Tribute was demanded of him, tho' he was the Son of God, he refused not to pay it unto *Cesar*, tho' it put him to the Charge and Expense of a Miracle, *Mat. 22. 21. & 17. 24.* to the close. Next consider but a little the Practise of the Primitive Christians, and you'll find them most Exemplary in their Obedience unto the Powers and Magistrates under which they lived, Honouring their Persons, Revering their Power, paying them Tribute, obeying their just and righteous Laws; But possibly you are not so very well seen in Antiquity as to know the Principles or Practice of the Primitive Christians, and therefore I shall give you a little, and but a little hint of this Matter. *Polycarp*, who flourish'd in the year of Christ 130, in whose Days *Adrian* was Emperor, and who so persecuted the Christians, that some have accounted the Persecution in his Days to have been the fourth General Persecution; yet the same *Polycarp* a little before his Martyrdom, wrote to the Christians at *Philippi*, earnestly Exhorting them all to obey their Rulers, *Euseb. Hist. lib. 3. chap. 36. pag. 108.* And when he stood before the Pro-council, he told him, that this was one great Law of Christianity that we are Commanded by God, to give all due Honour and Obedience to Princes and Potentates. See also *Euseb. Hist. lib. 4. ch. 25. pag. 132.* *Tertulian* also, who flourish'd in the year of our Lord 198. tells us in his Apology, *Ch. 9. page 31.* (which Apology he wrote upon the account of the dreadful Persecution raised against the Christians by the Emperor *Severus*) That it was a solemn part of the Churches Service in his time, to pray for the Happiness and Prosperity of the Princes under whom they lived; His Words are, ' We pray for the Emperors, for the ' Grandees, and Ministers of State, for the Prosperity of the Age, for the ' quietness of Affairs, for the Continuation of their Lives and Government, ' that God would give them a long Life, a secure Reign, an undisturbed ' House, and powerful Armies: And in the same Page he adds, They that ' think we are not Solicitous about the safety of Princes, let them look into ' the Commands of God, Recorded in our Scriptures, which we freely ' expose to the view of all, there they'll find we are enjoin'd to pray for

the Happiness of our Enemies and Persecuters. Hear also what *Justine Martyr* says in his second Apology, page 64. (which he wrote upon the account of the Fourth General Persecution raised against the Christians by the Emperor *Antoninus Philosophus*) * For your Taxes and Tributes (says he) we are above all other Men, every where ready to bring them to your Collectors and Officers, being Taught so to do by our Great Master, who bade these who asked the Question, whether they might pay Tribute to *Cesar*, to give unto *Cesar* the things which are *Cesars*, and unto God the things which are Gods.

Now, Sir, I have all along made an impartial Search after this your Principle of denying the Civil Authority upon the account of Differences in Religion. In the word of God I cannot find it ; In our Confession of Faith it is not to be seen ; In our Covenants it cannot be had, neither can I find the Primitive Christians ever Dreamed upon such a Principle ; yet possibly else where I may find you out, and therefore am obliged to Travel a little further. Will you necessitate me to go to *Rome* to see if I can find you there, I know this will be a little Surprising to some poor ~~Meaning~~ People ; yet if I really find you *There* sitting and Voting with the Pope's, Cardinals, and if I make it Evident to all judicious People, surely none have Reason to blame me ; After a little Enquiry, then I find you giving your Suffrage and Vote with Cardinal *Bellarmino*, let all Men judge whether this be true, or not, his Principle, with respect to this Head, is to be seen in *Bellarmino, de Pontif. Rom. lib. 3. cap. 6. coll. 891.* where he expressly, and in plain terms asserts, That if a King be an Heretick, or an Infidel, and seeks to draw his Dominions into his Sect, it's not only Lawful, but Necessary to deprive him of his Kingdom : I have given you his Sentiments in *English*, because few of your Followers understand the *Latine* Tongue. If you think I have Misrepresented the Cardinal, please search him ; and if I have done so, proclaim my Error unto the World, I need not here stand to explain the Cardinals Meaning, his Words are plain, nor need I Evidence to the Judicious (who know your Principle) that yours is one with his : But I must do you this Justice, to tell, that by the Word *Heretick*, the Cardinal means Protestants, and I suppose you incline thereby to understand every Prince or Sovereign that doth not with you in every Jot maintain the same Principles ; yet all the Difference lyes only in the Meaning of the Word, and not in the thing it self. And now, upon the whole, let the World judge, whether the Church of *Scotland* had Reason to declare you to be none of her Communion. And so much with respect to your first Principle of denying the Civil Magistrates Authority.

Now follows your Second Erronious Principle, viz. Your denying the Ecclesiastick Authority ; Upon which account also the Church declares you to be none of her Communion, and with respect to this Principle of yours, I think it will be no hard Task for me to prove that Principle of yours is contrary, both to the Scriptures and our Covenants.

First, That it is Antiscriptural, see *Mat.* 16. 19. and answerable to this, consider the Divine positive Command, *Heb.* 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves,* which certainly looks as well to the Authority of Discipline (which requireth Submission) as to the Obedience that ought to be given to the Word in Doctrine; For this Cause Officers are designed both here and else where Rulers: If you think your Practice and Principle do not Contradict these Scriptures, pray Sir, will you give us an Account of the Gloss you will put upon them, and let all Men see that you disown not that Divine positive Precept.

2dly. To prove that this Principle of yours is Anticovenanted, I have no more to do, but to refer you to the first Article of the Solemn League, the Words are, 'That we shall sincerely, really, and constantly, through the Grace of GOD, endeavour in our several Places and Callings, the Preservation of the Protestant Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland in Doctrine; Worship, Discipline, and Government: And in the National Covenant we Promise and Swear by the great Name of the Lord our GOD, that we shall continue in the Obedience of the Doctrine and Discipline of this Kirk, and shall Defend the same according to our Vocation and Power, all the Days of our Lives, under the Pains contained in the Law of God, and Danger of Body and Soul in the Day of God's fearful Judgment. Pray, Sir, what is to be Understood by the Church Discipline, what is the meaning of that, when we Swear to continue in the Obedience of the Discipline of this Kirk? Is it not, that we should submit our selves to Ecclesiastical Censures? Now, how Faithfully, or rather Unfaithfully, is this Article of our Covenant, observed by you, let the World judge and see? I conclude this Anticovenanted Principle of yours, with the last Words of the Learned Mr. *Durham* on *Revelation*, *Chap. 2d. Lect. 3.* in his Discourse concerning Church-Government and Discipline, his Words are, 'A time of Reckoning will come, when this Exercise of Discipline and Submission thereto, according to Mens Places and Engagements, will not be found so indifferent as it is esteem'd by many, and Disputes of this kind we suppose will not be admitted when the Lord will declare that he hath ratified in Heaven, what according to his Will hath been pronounced in this Ordinance of Discipline upon Earth: So that by what I have said on this General Observe, I think all good Men may be sufficiently convinc'd that it's upon the Account of no honest Principle you maintain that the Church hath declar'd you to be none of her Communion.

I come now to pass some more particular Remarks upon the Printed Protestation, Declinature and Appeal, compared with the Authentick written and subscribed one.

1 Remark, Page 1. Line 1. I find you term your self present Minister of the Gospel at *Balmagie*. *Quer. 1.* By vertue of what Authority were you a Minister of the Gospel? By that same Authority you are Depos'd, and your Relation to *Balmagie* dissolv'd? But if you give a solid Answer to the 9th.

Querie

Querie before proposed, you shall satisfy your self as to that, but there is too much Ground to think this may be *ultra posse*.

2. Since you own your self present Minister at *Balmageigh*, how can you have clearness in you Conscience to leave that People so frequently as you do? And by vertue of what Power do you usurp the Charges, and Molest the Congregations of other Ministers, your Practice claims the Title of Minister of the Gospel of *Scotland*, or rather Universal Prelate of that Land.

2 particular Remark page 1. You say, you are odiously and invidiously (especially by Ministers) represented to the World as Schismatics, Seperatists, and Teachers of Unsound and Divisive Doctrine; And in your Postscript you say, these Epithets are odious to you. But, Sir, were ever these Epithets pleasant to the greatest Schismatics that e'er were in the World, the greatest of them never loved to be accounted so: But I hope the Church may be allowed (tho' not by you) to call you what really you are, and by your true Name. As to your teaching of unsound Doctrine, it may be easily judged, whether I have not sufficiently proven this from what is above-narrated. As to the fearful Epithets of Schismatics and Seperatists, where-with you and your Party are Branded, and which are so odious to you, let all good Men judge whether you may be justly called so: The Definition of *Schisme*, is a separating from the Unity and Communion of a True Church, whether more or less pure, if it be a true Church: If you doubt this Definition, know that it is the Definition the Learned Mr. *Durhame* gave of it on *Rev. 18. 4*.

Now, Sir, Do you own the Church of *Scotland* to be a true Church? Whether you own it or not, I think it will be denied by no Protestant. Do not you separate from the Unity of this Church, it's evident to the World you do not join in Communion with the Constitute Church of *Scotland*? Whether then had the Church Reason or not to Term you and your Party Schismatics? But still this Epithet is odious to you, and therefore you tell the People you do not separate, (to speak strictly) from the Constitute Church of *Scotland*; what you do, is rather a Secession: But hereby you bewray your Ignorance, and it appears you know not what a Secession is, therefore take the same Definition of it which Mr. *Durhame* has in the forecited place, "It is said He, without refusing Communion, locally to remove upon some urgent or lawful Occasion, Spiritual or Temporal, to an other or better Constitute Church. So that in a Word, Secession is a local Removal from one Church to another Constitute Church. Now, Sir, Is this your Practice? Surely no, for you refuse Communion with the Constitute Church of *Scotland*, and you have not removed to another, or better Constitute Church; so that what you do cannot at all be said to be a Secession, but an actual and positive Separation, and therefore justly are you and your Party Termed Schismatics. As for the other odious Epithet of being Separatists, I have no more to do, but only to look to an Expression in the first Page of your Protestation, and there I find you owning the

the Charge as odious as it is; you say you was once embodied with the Ministers while there remained any hope of having Grievances Redressed. What is it to be embodied? Is it not to be in Union and Communion? Will you plainly own you were once Imbodied, which says, you are not so now? What is it to be not embodied? Is it not to be separated from the same hence called *Schism in the Body*, there is therefore nothing more plain, than that you acknowledge you have separated your self from the Ministers of this Church, but yet you must not be called Separatists, it's too odious an Epithet, it is an unaccountable Aspersion, as you call it.

III. Particular Mark, I discover your Printed Protestation not to be a genuine Double of what you sent in to the Commission of the late General Assembly, tho' you have the Confidence (I had almost said the Impudence) to assert, that the Matter of your Printed one was inclosed in a Line to *Nicol Spence*, and by him deliver'd to the Commission, *Sept 29. 1708*, which plainly notifies your great Dissimulation, to say no worse. It's true, in the last Paragraph of your Protestation, *pag. 6.* you crave Liberty to extend and enlarge this your Protestation, Declinature and Appeal, as need requires: But I hope you did not crave Liberty to Refile from any of it, or to take any thing out of it, which I find you have really done, and a very Material Point indeed it is, your written Protestation subscribed with your own Hands, runs thus, ' And as to our Judgment anent the Cess, we reckon it Duty in the People of God, to withdraw all Support, Succour, and Assistance that may Contribute to the Strengthening the Man of Sin, or any of the Adversaries of Truth, as the Word of God instructs us, or yet to support these who are for establishing the Kingdom of Satan, and bringing down the Kingdom of the Son of God in this Nation Devoted to the Lord by Covenant, in Opposition to which the present Powers are Engaged. Now, there is not one Jot of this last Clause, *viz. (in Opposition unto which the present Powers are Engaged)* in your printed Protestation, as may be seen from *pag. 2. 3d. line* and downwards: But it seems Conscience hath smitten you for this Clause, or the fear of Man hath made you keep it out of your Printed Paper. And, Sir, If this be your Opinion, why are you afraid to tell so much, this looks not like a faithful Minister of the Gospel, as you account your self to be; nor, like the only Minister, but this must necessarily be reckoned a sufficient Document of your Dissimulation, which is but a bad Tool for advancing Religion and Reformation: I might also here take notice of the Alteration you make in your Printed Declinature, as to your detraactive way of speaking of the present *QUEEN*, whom you term in your Genuine Paper, *Your Queen or their Queen*, I know not which of them, there being only (*Their*) which must express one of the two: But in your Corrupted Printed Copy, it is the present *Queen*. I think the Alteration makes but a very small Amends to Her Majesty; and I could heartily wish, you would learn to pay some more Deference to such a Honoured Sovereign as our

Queen

Queen is, I must call Her ours, as all Good Men in Her Dominions Will, though you and the Jacobites disown Her to be yours. There be several other Differences betwixt the Genuine and Corrupted Copy, which I have neither Time, nor Room for, and which possibly some others may afterward take in task.

IV. *Remark pag. 2d. line. 13.* You declare it your hearty Desire to adhere to the written Word of God, and to what ever is founded thereupon, such as the Confession of Faith, Covenants, &c. But how far you have erred from these, is already held forth to a Demonstration.

V. *Remark pag. 5. line 19. and downward,* You say, ' Seing we cannot with Freedom in our Conscience, compear before their Judicatories, while these Defections are not acknowledged and removed; so we must, so long decline them, and hereby do decline them as unfaithful Judges, in such Matters. As for our Grievances, we acknowledge we do not want them, nor can we expect to want Grievances so long as we are Militant: we desire to be very sensible of our Grievances, and are daily labouring to get them removed, and (blessed be God,) not without Success, as is evident from the satisfying return the Assemblys Commissioners to Her Majesty have lately made; And what an unreasonable thing is it to decline the Ministers as unfaithful Judges, because of their Grievances? Is not this to add Affliction to the Afflicted? And, Sir, I must tell you in plain Terms, you decline the Authority of the purest and best Constitute Church in the World, and so consequently you must be of Opinion, that no Church in the World hath Authority, and that all Ministers of the Gospel throughout the World are unfaithful Judges; Or, be pleased to tell where a better Constitute Church is.

VI. *Remark, pag. 5. line 25. and downward,* you have a dreadful Satanical Protestation, the words are, ' We further Protest and testify against what ever they may conclude or determine in their Ecclesiastical Courts by Ratifications, Sentences, Censures, &c. that have been or shall be made, or given out by them, and protest that the same may be made void and null, and not interpreted as binding to us: Pray, Sir, Have the Church of Scotland made no good Acts at all, since the late happy Revolution? I think no solid Protestant, or good Christian acquainted with them, will assert this, yet by this your Protestation, these Acts must not be interpreted as binding upon you; yea, Sir, by this Protestation of yours, you declare, That tho' the Church of Scotland should make never so many good Acts; yea, though all these good Acts mentioned in your Postscript, should be made by them, yet they are not to be reputed as binding upon you: By this Protestation of yours, the World may easily decern, that it is not upon the account of any bad Conduct in the Church of Scotland, you separate from her, for let her Act never so honestly and zealously, by this you declare you will never Subject to her Authority.

VII. *Remark, pag. 5.* Near the close, you say, you detest and abhor that Principle of casting off the Ministry, wherewith you are odiously and

and Malitiously Reproached; Is not this Sir true Matter of Fact? Is it any thing else but what you have printed and proclaimed your self? What else do you mean, by saying in that same page, you Decline them, you testify against what ever they may conclude by Act, &c. Is not this a casting off the Ministry? I know not indeed what other Sense to put upon it, if you can without a manifest Contradiction put a more favourable Sense on your own Words, I am satisfied to hear it.

VIII. *Remark pag. 6. line 1. and downward,* You say, Till they bring in their own Principles and Practices, and yours also, and try them by the Law and Testimony, &c. they can never prove you to be Schismatics or Separatists from the Kirk of *Scotland*. By the Practices of the Church, I think you do mean the Actings and Proceedings of the Church, else I know not your Meaning. Now, Sir, The World and you have a full Account of what hath been done by the Church of *Scotland* in the Acts and Proceedings of their Assemblies; and if you can find any of their Acts contrary to the word of God, I think you should be so kind as to tell them what Portion of Scripture any of their Acts strike against. As for the Principles of the Church of *Scotland*, you have them all clearly proven by Scripture in their Confession of Faith, Catechism Larger and Shorter; and every Minister of this Church when he Administrates the Sacrament of Baptism, takes the Parent Engaged to train up the Child according to these. As for your Principles, I have already in my General Remark (unto which I refer you) brought them to the Law and Testimony, and have not found them speak according to these, and therefore there can be no Light in them; And so I think there is no injustice done you when you are branded with these Epithets, which you say, are so Odious to you.

IX. *Remark, pag. 6.* As to your Appeal to the first Free, Faithful and rightly Constitute Assembly of this Church, I must be bold to tell you, there were never more free and better Constitute Assemblies than we have; And as to their Faithfulness, I am confident the Assemblies of the Church of *Scotland* have God's Approbation in the Main, and her Defects can never be a Ground of Separation, and so needs not value your Approbation: But were they never so Faithful, and tho' they should make the most faithful Acts, yet you have already protested, that they shall not be interpreted as binding upon you.

As to your Postscript, which was not sent to the Commission with your written Declinature, and therefore ought not to be called a Postscript, but rather a new Paper containing Additional Unchristian Defamations of the Ministers of the Gospel, and a Libel against the Church and Commission of the General Assembly: What I have said already, if duly pondered, may suffice to Answer all that is said in it; Only as to the Brethren who are amused to hear that the Commission Threatens them with the highest Church-Censure, while in the mean time they have declared them to be none of their Communion: It seems they have not mused upon the Extent
of

of Church Discipline, nor upon what the Learned Mr. *Durham* says on *Rev. Ch. 2. v. 2.* to which I refer them, wishing, That the Lord may be pleased to Covince you of your great Error, and of the mighty Prejudice you do to the Church and Interest of Christ in this Land; by your irregular and disorderly Courses. I am a Well-wisher to the Covenanted Work of Reformation, and shall not cease (Grace assisting) to Weep in Secret for a broken and torn Church: And to shew you that I'm impartial, I shall tell you, as I abhorre your Practice that's destructive of the Prosperity and quiet of our Mother Church (hitherto pitied and not entirely forsaken by her only Lord and Head Christ Jesus) so I find my self obliged to declare my great Grief for, and to give my Testimony against some Sinful steps of Defection carried on by some Unfaithful Persons, undeservedly of too great Influence among us, and reclaim'd against by an honest part of the Ministry we will not give over Pleading, with such, yet we will still adhere to the Church of *Scotland*, unless (which our Covenanted God forbid) Christ shall give her a Bill of Divorcement: As we, nor no Man of common Sense can justify your unrival'd and hateful Schism, so we resolve (thro' Grace) to contend zealously against all (of whatever Denomination) who would forsake the Good Old Way, and the known Principles of the Church of *Scotland*, and who study to please Men rather than God; We must not turn aside to right or left Hand, ~~and~~ of both these letts it may be said, *Dum vitant stulti vitia in contraria Currunt.* Happy is the Man of whom it shall not in the end of the Day be verified what was said by the Poet.

Insidit in scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdin. A detestable Neutrality and Indifference (now a days ignorantly call'd *Moderation*) grafted on Carnal Prudence, and supported by Sinful Politicks on the one hand, and a Scandalous Schism on the other, are equally abjur'd by our Covenants, and are two Extremis, we should equally Guard and Pray against.

F I N I S.

1 JA 64

